

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

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INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15

USIA-15 OMB-01 IO-13 RSR-01 SAJ-01 /128 W

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R 240915Z AUG 73

FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8003

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

USLO PEKING

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L HONG KONG 8549

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, CH

SUBJECT: PEKING'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS FOREIGNERS IN CHINA AND
EXCHANGE PROGRAM

SUMMARY: EVIDENCE OF PRC SENSITIVITY ABOUT THE ACTIVITY
OF FOREIGNERS MAY BE RELATED TO A CENTRAL DIRECTIVE ON THIS
PROBLEM. IT IS UNCERTAIN TO WHAT EXTENT DOMESTIC POLITICS MAY
BE INVOLVED BUT IT SEEMS UNLIKELY THAT THE REGIME INTENDS TO RE-
VERSE ITS POLICIES ON ADMISSION OF AMERICANS OR ON THE EXCHANGE
PROGRAM. END SUMMARY.

1. EVIDENCE OF SOME INCREASED PRC SENSITIVITY ABOUT THE ACTIVITY
OF FOREIGNERS IN CHINA HAS APPEARED IN THE PAST FEW MONTHS.
DURING THIS TIME THE PRC HAS EXPELLED A CHINESE-AMERICAN SCHOLAR
FOR ALLEGED " ILLEGAL INFORMATION GATHERING" (HONG KONG 8460,) AND
HAS CONFISCATED THE EXPOSED FILM OF ANOTHER SUCH VISITOR. A
NOTED WESTERN AUTHOR, ROSS TERRILL, TOLD US THAT RECENTLY HE WAS
PICKED UP IN SHANGHAI TOGETHER WITH TWO CHINESE WORKERS WITH WHOM
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HE WAS TALKING ON THE STREET. HE WAS RELEASED AFTER BEING VOUCHERED

FOR BY HIS HOTEL, BUT AS HE LEFT THE TWO CHINESE WERE STILL BEING HELD. IN ADDITION, A BRITISH CORRESPONDENT VISITING KWEILIN AND A MEMBER OF A U.S. EDUCATORS GROUP RECENTLY GOT INTO DIFFICULTY ON SEPARATE INCIDENTS INVOLVING TAKING PHOTOS OF POSTERS.

2. THE APPARENT HEIGHTENING OF SECURITY AS IMPLIED BY THESE EVENTS MAY BE RELATED IN PART TO INCREASED POLITICAL ACTIVITY IN PREPARATION FOR THE HOLDING OF PARTY AND STATE CONGRESS IN PEKING. THE REPORTED POSTPONEMENT OF ISSUANCE OF NEW VISAS UNTIL MID-OCTOBER (HONG KONG 8347) IS PROBABLY DIRECTLY RELATED TO THE FORTHCOMING MEETINGS. PRECAUTIONARY MOVES TO PROTECT THE CONGRESS DELEGATES ARE ALSO PROBABLY RESPONSIBLE FOR REPORTED NIGHTLY CHECKS SINCE JULY OF IDENTIFICATION AND TRAVEL DOCUMENTS OF CHINESE VISITORS STAYING IN PEKING HOTELS. MORE BROADLY IT IS POSSIBLE THAT THE REGIME HAS ALSO ISSUED A DIRECTIVE CALLING FOR INCREASED ATTENTION TO SECURITY PROBLEMS INVOLVED IN THE CONTINUING INFLUX OF FOREIGN VISITORS.

3. THE EXPULSION OF THE PROFESSOR WAS PROBABLY AN ISOLATED CASE APPARENTLY RELATED TO HIS AUTHORSHIP OF A TOO FRIENDLY BIOGRAPHY OF CHOU EN-LAI AND THE POLITICAL EMBARRASSMENT WHICH IT WAS PRESUMABLY CAUSING THE PREMIER. IT IS UNCERTAIN TO WHAT EXTENT DOMESTIC POLITICS MAY BE INVOLVED IF AT ALL IN THE OTHER CASES OF SECURITY SENSITIVITY IN REGARD TO FOREIGNERS. BUT IN A SOMEWHAT RELATED FIELD, IT SEEMS CLEAR THAT CRITICISM OF THE CHINESE DOCTORS' REPORT ON THEIR VISIT TO THE U.S. EARLIER THIS YEAR AND CONTROVERSY OVER A SIMILAR REPORT BY A CHINESE SCIENCE DELEGATION (HONG KONG 8261) WERE PART OF A LEFTIST REACTION.

4. GIVEN MAO'S RECENT MEETINGS WITH CHINESE-AMERICAN SCIENTISTS AND THE CONTINUED PUBLICITY ACCORDED TO SUCH VISITORS, IT SEEMS UNLIKELY TO US THAT THE REGIME INTENDS DRASTICALLY TO REVISE ITS POLICY EITHER ON ADMISSION OF AMERICAN VISITORS OR ON THE EXCHANGE PROGRAM. CRITICS MAY BE ABLE TO WIN SOME CHANGES IN THE MAKE UP OF FUTURE CHINESE SCIENTIFIC DELEGATION--PERHAPS IDEOLOGICAL WATCHDOGS WILL BE APPOINTED TO ACCOMPANY SCIENTISTS ON FUTURE TRIPS. BUT MAO'S PERSONAL ENDORSEMENT OF THE IMPORTANCE OF LEARNING FROM FOREIGN SCIENCE SUGGESTS THAT ANY SUCH CHANGES WILL HAVE A LIMITED IMPACT ON THE EXCHANGE PROGRAM.

5. COMMENT: PUBLICITY ON THE APPARENT CONTROVERSY SURROUNDING THE CONFIDENTIAL

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EXCHANGE DELEGATIONS WOULD PROBABLY EMBARRASS THOSE IN CHINA WHO ARE STRONGLY IN FAVOR OF SUCH PROGRAMS. CONSEQUENTLY WE SUGGEST THAT INFORMATION ON THIS SUBJECT BE CLOSELY HELD.
OSBORN

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